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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/602,441	06/24/2003	Anish Sen Majumdar	086/002	5072
22869	7590	03/27/2006	EXAMINER	
GERON CORPORATION 230 CONSTITUTION DRIVE MENLO PARK, CA 94025				REDDIG, PETER J
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		1642		

DATE MAILED: 03/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/602,441	MAJUMDAR ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Peter J. Reddig	1642	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) 1-24 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ .

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: ____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 13-24, drawn to ONE isolated polypeptide for an immunogenic composition that elicits an immune response against human telomerase reverse transcriptase (TERT), classified in class 530, subclass 350.
(Upon election of Group I, applicant must further choose ONE polypeptide SEQ ID NO. from Claim 20: as each polypeptide represents an independent invention, not a species)
- II. Claims 13-24, drawn to ONE isolated nucleic sequence for an immunogenic composition that elicits an immune response against human TERT, classified in class 536, subclass 23.1.
(Upon election of Group I, applicant must further choose ONE nucleic sequence encoding ONE polypeptide from SEQ ID NOs in Claim 20: as each nucleotide sequence represents an independent invention, not a species)
- III. Claims 1-12, drawn to a method for eliciting an immune response in a mammalian subject to TERT with ONE isolated polypeptide classified in class 424, subclass 184.1.
(Upon election of Group I, applicant must further choose ONE polypeptide SEQ ID NO. from Claim 10: as each polypeptide represents an independent invention, not a species)

IV. Claims 1-12, drawn to a method for eliciting an immune response in a mammalian subject to TERT with ONE isolated nucleic acid sequence classified in class 514, subclass 44.

(Upon election of Group I, applicant must further choose ONE nucleic acid encoding ONE polypeptide encoding SEQ ID NOs. in Claim 10: as each nucleotide sequence represents an independent invention, not a species)

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

The protein of Group I is related to the nucleic acid of Group II by virtue of the fact that the nucleic acid codes for the protein. The nucleic acid molecule has utility for the recombinant production of the protein in a host cell. Although the nucleic acid and the protein are related, since the nucleic acid encodes the specifically claimed protein, they are distinct inventions because the protein product can be made by other and materially distinct processes, such as purification from the natural source. Further, the nucleic acid can be used for processes other than the production of protein, such as nucleic acid hybridization assays.

Furthermore, searching the inventions of Groups I and II together would impose a serious search burden. In the instant case, the search of the polypeptides and polynucleotides are not coextensive. The inventions of Groups I and II have a separate status in the art as shown by their different classifications. In cases such as this one where descriptive sequence information is provided, the sequences are searched in appropriate database. There is search burden also in the non-patent literature. Prior to the concomitant isolation and expression of the sequences of interest there may be journal articles devoted solely to polypeptides, which would not have described the polynucleotide. Similarly, there may have been "classical" genetics papers, which

had no knowledge of the polypeptide but spoke to the gene. Searching, therefore is not coextensive. In addition, the claims include 5 distinct sequences inclusive of various fragments and mutants of TERT. This search requires an extensive analysis of the art retrieved in a sequence search and will require an in-depth analysis of technical literature. The scope of polynucleotides as claimed extend beyond the polynucleotide that encodes the claimed polypeptides as explained above: furthermore, a search of the nucleic acid molecules of claims 13-24 would require an oligonucleotide search, which is not likely to result in relevant art with respect to the polypeptide of group I. As such, it would be burdensome to search the inventions of Groups I and II.

The inventions of Groups III and IV are materially distinct methods, which differ at least in objectives, method steps, reagents and/or dosages and/or schedules used, response variables, and criteria for success. The methods of Groups III and IV are related in that they describe a method for eliciting an immune response to endogenous TERT in a mammalian species and the protein of Group III is related to the nucleic acid of Group IV by virtue of the fact that the nucleic acid codes for the protein. However, they are distinct in that they employ materially distinct reagents, a nucleic acid or a protein, as described above.

Furthermore, searching all of the claims of Groups III and IV would invoke a burdensome search because the inventions have been classified separately. Thus, each invention has attained recognition in the art as a separate subject for inventive effort, and also a separate field of search. This would necessitate different searches in the patent and or non-patent literature, as described above for Groups I and II, and the consideration of different patentability issues.

The inventions of Group I and II and the methods of Groups III and IV are related as product and processes of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (I) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (ii) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product [see *MPEP* § 806.05(h)]. In the instant case, the TERT protein of Group I could be used to screen isolated, TERT directed antibodies for immunoreactivity. Additionally, the nucleic acid sequence of Group II could be employed as a probe for detection of TERT DNA or mRNA in a biological sample.

Furthermore, searching all of the claims (i.e., all Groups) would invoke a burdensome search because the inventions have been classified separately. Thus, each invention has attained recognition in the art as a separate subject for inventive effort, and also a separate field of search. This would necessitate different searches in the patent and or non-patent literature and the consideration of different patentability issues

Species Election for Groups I-IV

Claims 12 and 22 are generic to the following disclosed patentably distinct species:

- 1) IL-12
- 2) GM-CSF
- 3) IL-2
- 4) MPL

The above species are independent or distinct because they comprise structurally distinct molecules and have different modes of operation and different effects. Further, each species would require different searches and the consideration of different patentability issues.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species, even though this requirement is traversed. Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of an allowable generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Note:

The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and the product claims are subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be considered for rejoinder. All claims directed a nonelected process invention must require all the limitations of an allowable product claim for that process invention to be rejoined.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103 and 112. Until all claims to the elected product are found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowable product claim will not be rejoined. See MPEP § 821.04(b). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution to require the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peter J. Reddig whose telephone number is (571) 272-9031. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey Siew can be reached on (571)272-0787. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Peter J. Reddig Ph.D.
Examiner
Art Unit 1642

